Two Sermons

PREACHED IN

THE CHURCH OF S. ALOYSIUS,
OXFORD,

BY

H. E. CARDINAL NEWMAN,

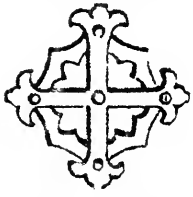
ON

TRINITY SUNDAY, 1880.

20 p.

Printed for Private Circulation.

AD MAJOREM



DEI GLORIAM

ST. ALOYSIUS

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PREFACE.

THE following Report has been printed to meet a wish that had been expressed by many to possess what might be a memorial of a memorable occasion. It is hoped that it gives a fairly accurate account of two utterances remarkable in themselves; and in being the echoes, as it were, of a voice long silent, but of old so prevailing within the University of Oxford.

As the Sermons were preached extempore, H. E. Cardinal Newman is no further responsible than in having kindly acceded to the request of myself and others to have a report of them printed.

T. B. PARKINSON.

S. Aloysius' Presbytery,
June 9, 1880.

SERMON I.

Trinity Sunday Morning.

IT is written in the 35th Psalm, and at the 10th verse:—"*For with Thee is the fountain of life, and in Thy light we shall see light.*"

DURING the last half-year, my dear brethren, we have been engaged in tracing and adoring the various steps which accompanied our Lord's coming upon earth. We began with Advent; indeed, we may say we began with November, because November being the month given to the memory of the dead, we are reminded of what caused death, we are reminded of sin, and sin is the foundation on which the series of doctrines begins in which we start from Advent. First, we adored our Lord's coming upon earth, His Incarnation, His taking flesh; and then we went on to trace Him into the wilderness, and to try to imitate, according to our measure and our power, His fast. Then, after Lent, we came to Holytide, the time of His Passion; and commemorated and adored the various wonderful truths which in it are contained. And so we were led on to His Resurrection, and to His forty days, and to His Ascension, and then to the coming of the Holy Ghost. And now, for about half-a-year, we remain contemplating the facts and the details of those great events;

and naturally and suitably we begin with adoring Almighty God Himself. He is our end, to whom we go. Sooner or later for mercy, anyhow for judgment to Him we go, He is the beginning and the end.

Such is the course of the year. Half-a-year—full of change, I may say—relating to the economy of the Son of God upon earth; and the other half, a time of rest, and peace, and contemplation, and of looking back upon the past, and upon that in detail which He has done for us. And now we commemorate the most glorious mystery, the most joyful mystery; we commemorate what we do not understand, but we understand sufficient to be thankful for it. It is a mystery which must ever be before us, which we ever enjoy, and which we never can understand here; nor, indeed, understand even in heaven, for Almighty God alone understands Himself. Sometimes this great mystery is compared, and with great reason, to the sun in this visible world. The sun, we know, is the cause of all good to us; the sun is the source of heat, and of light, and of growth, and in a certain sense, of all that we are; yet we cannot look at it; if we attempt to look at it we are blinded. And so it is with respect to that great mystery of the Holy Trinity in Unity. We can enjoy it, if we take it as it is presented to us; but if we attempt to outstep those bounds, if we attempt by our own skill, or our own wit, to know more about it, or to come to conclusions about it, over or beyond what Almighty God has told us by revelation, we are as if we dared and blinded ourselves with the sun. That blindness is

what we mean by heresy on this point. We mean doing that—attempting to do that—which we cannot do. We know that certain great truths are told us about this mystery. We must take them, we must use them; but if we attempt to compare them, and to unite them in one, or to do anything more with them than what the Church has first done, anything more than what has come down to us from the Apostles themselves, anything more than what was put into them, and had grown up in such fulness in the first ages,—if we attempt anything more, we, in fact, blind ourselves; we, in fact, as a matter of necessity, go into error or heresy, because we attempt what is beyond. Such, emphatically, was the heresy of Arius in the beginning. There were certain truths; and he wished to unite them in his own way, and others in their own way. Whereas what the great defenders of Catholic truth said was, "We do not understand it more than you, but we must take what is given; and it is worth it, the sacrifice of faith; for faith is a sacrifice. It is worth it, because we gain so much by it."

If we look into what is told us, we find this characteristic, that to those who take it as the Church places it before us, it is perfectly intelligible for those purposes, those practical purposes, those devotional purposes for which it is given; but if we attempt to go beyond that, we fail. It is not wonderful that the things of heaven cannot be brought out in human language, or by human thought. They can only be, in the dimmest way, approximated to; and what Almighty God has given us is certain statements which are true and useful, but which can-

not be combined, which it is beyond us to combine. And one of the first duties of the Church is, when a man becomes a Catholic, to put this truth of the Trinity, among other truths, before him; and it is most irrational in him to become a Catholic, and not accept it. He must take the truth as it is in the Athanasian Creed, take it as it is given us; for why does he come except to take that teaching?

In that teaching we use words which we are familiarized with, and which are used because we can really get no better words. Other languages, the Greek and the Latin, have other ways of expressing it, which we have not in English; and therefore I cannot use the words they use. But what we are accustomed to use are the words of Him who said, "There are three who bear witness in heaven,—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost." And we believe that the Father is God,—that is intelligible enough. No one who thinks and believes in God at all can fail to understand those words, "The Father is God." The poorest, the least educated, the dullest, can take in that truth, "The Father is God," and act upon it, and be devout upon it, and contemplate what is told us of Him with great reverence and awe. And so again to us "The Son is God" is a perfectly intelligible proposition, is one which we know, we feel. All Catholics know, not to say many others, what it is to believe in the Son of God, and to obey Him as God.

And then again, thirdly, to say "The Holy Ghost is God," and to worship Him as such, is perfectly intelligible, and no difficulty. And so, again, putting aside what I have said, to say that there is one God

is perfectly intelligible, and what we have no difficulty in believing. You would think it very strange if we did not believe it, and if others did not believe it too. We do not see any difficulty in it. Therefore, each proposition, taken by itself, is no difficulty. It is when we attempt to compare them together, when we want to know how it is that at the same time this is true, and at the same time the other three propositions are true too, then is our difficulty, and then it is when it is so tempting for any one who has not his mind properly trained; it is so very difficult for him to remain there, he will go on and find something better than a mystery. He wants to find something which will make it simple and easy, and that we know is the error commonly called heresy, as being against the Word given us from the beginning. And also it is quite as clear—and we can see why it is—that those truths, though they involve mysteries, are given us. It would be impossible for us to understand, to talk about an infinite Being, without a certain knowledge. We must, if but partly, comprehend what we are led to. We begin with truths; we follow them out, and then we come to an abyss. We must be content that it is an abyss. We cannot do more than submit to what is in the nature of things. Let us recollect—for it is plain—that we are speaking of infinites, that we begin by saying Almighty God is infinite. Indeed, how can we reason about infinites? Directly we begin to attempt it, we find insurmountable difficulties.

I may say, though it is not a subject which I understand, that in human science infinites lead us

to great perplexity. Are two infinites greater than one? We say, Impossible; and therefore how can *we* say what follows from the Father being God, the Son being God, and the Holy Ghost being God, since they are all infinites; each infinite, each such that we have not the means, we have not the propositions, we have not the first truths, we have not the starting-point from which to begin. We know nothing about it; therefore on the face of it our only resource is to take what is given to us. If we believe that that teaching—the Church's teaching—comes from God, there is no difficulty in believing what clearly, from the nature of the case, is above us; but if I am asked why it is that God, in His mercy, in His great love to us, has told us so much, and why it is that it is so cruelly ungrateful in those who, believing that He has spoken, will not take what is spoken; if one must say why Almighty God has been so good to us, it will be from a consideration which we all may feel and ought to feel, that the difficulty is, not that Almighty God has spoken mysteries to us, but that He should not have spoken to the whole world. It has been His will that for a time great parts of the world should be in darkness. But if He would be good to us, He must tell us something about Himself; and if He tells us something about Himself, He must tell us a mystery. How can He be good to us in the way of knowledge, except by putting difficulties, so to call them, in our way? It is one great proof to me of the power, one great evidence of the truth, of the whole Christian system, that S. Paul, and our Lord too, and the other Apostles, insisted so upon faith.

We cannot get—it stands to reason, since we are beings so finite in our reason, though reason is given us from God,—yet it cannot be that we should have truths told us for our comfort, without having so much faith as to take them on the chance, or rather the certainty, of their being mysteries.

My dear brethren, think what our state is, supposing God withholds Himself from us; think, supposing He leaves us, when we depart this life, to ourselves. First, let us suppose that He even allowed us to go to heaven—suppose it were consistent with His sanctity to allow anything which had so much error and imperfection, according to its kind, in it,—suppose we were allowed to go to heaven. We know how we all feel in the presence of strangers, we know how great a trial it is to most people to go into an unknown world; it has been the feeling of serious men—of the pagans—how awful that was. We know the famous lines, the few lines, so expressive, of the Emperor Hadrian; how it was that when he was dying he spoke to his own soul, he addressed his soul, for he had no one else to address; it was his only companion, his only comfort, his only resource, to speak to his own soul; he trusted nothing, he had no faith in anything, but he knew, he felt, that his soul would live when it was parted from his body, and that was his feeling of dismay; and so I say, if we know nothing of God, if nothing is told us here, if we may not learn to accustom ourselves to the idea of an infinite Father, of an infinite Son, of an infinite Holy Ghost, unless we pray to them continually, think what we lose in the prospect of the next world. It is the great mercy

of God—and miserable are they who do not feel it the greatest mercy possible,—that He tells us something, however mysterious and difficult, however to many people an exercise of faith, though not to others. I say, unless we had something to rely upon —that, of course, is the great reason for our devotion to the blessed angels and to the saints above, because it is our privilege, if we go to heaven, to have them for our fellows and companions—and therefore, in order that we may not go as to an unknown, as to a strange world, these truths are mercifully told us, and sad, indeed, is it if we do not avail ourselves of them. But first of all, of course, is the knowledge of God, and the love of God. Because, if we set ourselves up, if we so abuse ourselves, abuse our reason as to create habits of unbelief, or of complaint, or of despair, all those heresies and evil imaginations concerning Almighty God—why how terrible is the thought of it—how can we bear it? Can it be natural, is it possible, that that can be true which is so unnatural, that which is against the constitution of our minds? We cannot deny that, in a certain sense, religion is natural to us; it is part of ourselves; it requires aid from Almighty God, still it is part of ourselves; and therefore it is only consistent with ourselves, with our nature, to believe, and to rejoice in believing.

I have taken these words for my text because they are often understood by holy men as relating to the Holy Trinity; "For in Thee is the fountain of life," that is the Father; "and in Thy light," that is the Son; "we shall see light," the Holy Ghost; because they are all one, one in the other. But the

reason I have specially taken it is, because the Psalmist in that Psalm speaks with such effusion of heart of the blessedness of knowing God. He says, "O Lord, Thy mercy is in heaven : and Thy truth reacheth unto the clouds." It is the attribute of Almighty God which ought to be our solace, our meditation, our continual strength. In the Collect for to-day, for the First Sunday after Pentecost, we begin by styling Almighty God as *fortitudo in te sperantium*, "the strength of those who hope in Thee." Where are we without hope? We know here how miserable it is to be alone; I do not say that many people cannot be, in a certain measure, happy in themselves, but it is unnatural; society of some kind is quite a necessity; you know that it is a punishment so severe, that I think I am right in saying, though it was once given in prison to culprits and criminals, it is now not so given. So it is with solitary confinement, it will turn a man mad. And only let us think what the state of our souls will be hereafter, if we have nothing to go to, if we have no one to rely upon, if we have no one to pray to; if we have withheld prayer in this life, and we really cannot—it is a moral impossibility, from those dreadful sins we have indulged in—we cannot pray, we cannot think of Him; or if we do, we have formed our mind on such different ideas of truth and holiness, that we cannot love Him. You know bold men here say, "We will go to hell rather than believe this;" where will such sayings be when the Almighty Lord appears, when God Himself comes?

I was beginning to quote this Psalm, and have been led away; but the other verses are still more

expressive and beautiful: "O Lord, Thy mercy is in heaven, and Thy truth reacheth even to the clouds. Thy justice is as the mountains of God, Thy judgments are a great deep: men and beasts Thou wilt preserve, O Lord; O how hast Thou multiplied Thy mercy, O God. But the children of men shall put their trust under the covert of Thy wings. They shall be inebriated with the plenty of Thy house, and Thou shalt make them drink of the torrent of Thy pleasure. For with Thee is the fountain of life; and in Thy light we shall see light. Extend Thy mercy to them that know Thee, and Thy justice to them that are right in heart." We know the other holy writers, and all holy men speak in the same strain, though they do not use such emphatic words. When S. Paul says, "Eye hath not seen, and ear hath not heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive, the things which God has prepared for them that love Him." Or again, when S. John says with such deep feeling, and such beautiful calmness, and such deep meditation,—he says, "Dearly beloved, we are now the sons of God, and it hath not yet appeared what we shall be. We know that when He shall appear we shall be like to Him, because we shall see Him as He is; and every one that hath this hope in Him, sanctifieth himself as He also is holy."

My dear brethren, let us take this great feast as the remembrancer, the reminding to us of what the holy beatific vision of God will be. You know it is often said, perhaps lightly, that we have before us eternity; it is said lightly. You find people, friends of those who die, say that they are those

whom they have lost eternally; but they do not recollect this, that eternity in itself is no great boon, it is only a dreadful and awful thing. It is Almighty God who is the strength of eternity. If we leave out that word—the vision of God—if we leave out that, what is eternity but a misery! Let us, my dear brethren, lay this seriously to heart; let us be determined that since, as we all know, we have immortal souls, to take care that that immortality may be a mercy to us, and not a curse. That is an awful thought; we are led away so much by those things which are our duty; I mean to say the things of this world. Of course our duty lies in working in this world, no doubt about it; but still, it is a great difficulty, and a great temptation to forget too, that after all this world lasts but a short time, as Scripture tells us continually. A man may live a long life, but when he comes to look back upon it, it is nothing at all; and every one of us will either feel thus, by living long here, or if he is cut off at an earlier age, alas, alas, he will feel it in that other state. Let us improve the day while it is given us: let us beg Almighty God in His mercy to touch our hearts, and to create in us the beginning of a new life. God bless you!

SERMON II.

Trinity Sunday Evening.

IT is written in the 10th chapter of the Gospel according to S. John, and at the 14th and following verses:—"*I am the Good Shepherd, and I know Mine, and Mine know Me. As the Father knoweth Me, I know the Father; and I lay down My life for My sheep. And other sheep I have that are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice, and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd.*"

WE know, my dear brethren, that Almighty God not only created us, but in His mercy, in the mercy which we should expect from Him, but still of great mercy, He did not leave us to ourselves, He did not leave the world to itself, but He watched over and guided those whom He had made. Everywhere there is His providence and His moral governance. He shews us by the workings of our nature what is right, what is holy, what is true; and by His grace He enables the whole race of man to do enough, each for his own salvation. Such is His mercy and His providence over the whole world. But besides that, we know He has from the beginning had a chosen people; He has chosen those whom He decreed to bring closer to Himself, and to give them greater privileges. We read the re-

cord, the history, of that over-abundant grace of His in Scripture, and of the special mark of that providence; of that careful moral governance which He exerts over them, over His own whom He has called, whom He has elected. The characteristic name by which He signifies that more intimate mercy and love which He has for them, is the name of Shepherd. He called Himself in the Old Testament, as we read there, the Shepherd of Israel; and in turn His people say to Him, "We are the sheep of Thy pasture." We may recollect many passages in the Old Testament to the same effect. That beautiful Psalm, the 22nd, is David's recognition of his happy state. He says, "The Lord rules Me," or rather, "The Lord is my shepherd" — "The Lord is my shepherd, and I shall want nothing." Here is the correlative, the voice of the sheep showing his confidence, and his great gain by having such a shepherd. "The Lord is my shepherd, and I shall want nothing; He hath set me in a place of pasture, He hath brought me up on the water of refreshment; He hath converted my soul, He hath led me on to paths of justice for His own name's sake. For though I should walk in the midst of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me, Thy rod and Thy staff they have comforted me." That is the special character which Almighty God in His mercy takes to Himself towards His chosen people.

It is, of course, the continuation of His moral government, and of His providence; but still it is something more intimate. He speaks of them as knowing them; He speaks of them as having their

lives especially in His hand; and hence it is, as you may recollect, that He shewed a remarkable love to those who were shepherds. Whether it is that He first made them shepherds, and then chose them, or there is any other connection between His act and their condition, may be viewed one way or the other; but not to speak of Abel the just,—we know that Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, were prominently shepherds. Again, Moses was a shepherd; David, when a youth, was a shepherd. He thus singles out, as being peculiar to Him, this title, this office; and of course, from its great appropriateness, He in His mercy has to shew that He means to extend His mercy upon those whom He chose to guide others He calls them shepherds. We know that in the Prophet Ezekiel a great deal is said about bad shepherds—those who had the offices of pastor, and did not fulfil them.

And of course, in the New Testament, too, every priest, every guider of souls, every bishop, is especially called a shepherd; that title being used in their case as a kind of shadow of what in its fulness —of course in its infinite fulness—is in Almighty God Himself. Well, then, it is remarkable, for much follows from it, that when our Lord came, He called Himself, as I have read, the Good Shepherd; and if we had read that, not knowing Him to be God, supposing it was not the teaching of the Church, supposing we were left to conjecture as we could when we found our Lord so specially called a shepherd—it is obvious to consider that so high a title, so peculiar, so characteristic of Almighty God, being given to Him, would be some sort of suggestion to

He was more than man. Or we might take certainly another line. We might say, "No, He was not therefore more than man; but He was like David, and is the special instrument, or vicegerent, or representative, of the true and only shepherd." David is called a shepherd, and he specially was chosen,—he was one of those who were chosen out to be the representative, the vicegerent, the Vicar I may say, of Almighty God; and we know that was the case, though in another aspect of his character he was a man of blood; by which was meant, of course, that none—that there was only one holy, none was holy in the full sense of the word but Almighty God Himself. And, therefore, though David was thus chosen, and honoured, and raised up to feed the people of God, he, of course, was not therefore necessarily, in all respects, what a shepherd ought to be; but still, considered as a whole, we know he was, and he recognised himself as the shepherd of his sheep, in that very case in which by his own sin he brought not good, but evil upon his people; for you know that when the pestilence took place on account of David's sin, he said,—"These sheep, what have they done?" He felt that in that act he had not fulfilled his office of being a true and faithful shepherd of the sheep; but still, it being true that he was a shepherd as taking the place of Almighty God, and that he fulfilled it,—on the whole, he was a man, as we know, after God's own heart.

Now then, that being the state of the case as regards the Old Testament, the old dispensation, it being so that Almighty God was the one true shepherd, and yet that He appointed others to take

His place; when we come to the New Testament, for the most part Almighty God, through the greater part of the Gospel—Almighty God, our Lord Jesus Christ—keeps the title to Himself. I do not recollect that anywhere He speaks of all the Apostles being shepherds, though, of course in one sense, in which all priests are shepherds, they are shepherds too; but He did not give the name of shepherds to them. In S. Matthew, when He spoke of Peter being a rock, He did not there, it was not His will there to speak of S. Peter as a shepherd; but I think it very remarkable, and what demands great consideration, and great stress to be laid upon it—that there is one passage, as you know, in which our Lord commits His sheep—and He specially says "My sheep"—to one of the Apostles: He says, "Feed My sheep." He says it to S. Peter. I do not, on consideration, find anything parallel to that in the case of the other Apostles. Here is the great characteristic, and title, and office, which He exercises towards His elect people, towards those whom He calls together in His Church. This title, this office, He delegates, on His going away, to one of the Apostles, and that is S. Peter; and I say there is nothing like such a delegation, and so special, so peculiar, to any other Apostle. The Church calls S. Peter the Pastor *Ordinarius*, the "Ordinary"—according to the law of the Church and the rule of the Church—the shepherd.

And when we come to look at the passage in which He thus delegates His office, or makes what I may call a vicegerent, or Vicar, instead of Himself there seems no occasion for it from the circumstance

of the case. It seems to be as if it was because He was going away. We know He said, "All power is given to Me in heaven and in earth;" and then He says, "Go and teach all nations." He says He will be with His Apostles till the end of time, all days, always. Now, here is something parallel to that, and I say the particular delegation does not seem to be called for by anything. S. Peter had not neglected His sheep; His sheep had not strictly been given to him. I say that, because, as is sometimes said, and what has some truth in it, it was a restoration of S. Peter after his fall; but I say his fall was the denial of his Lord. It had no connection with His sheep; it had no connection with those who were to be brought into the Church. We may say that the three times—for emphasis' sake, the three times—in which our Lord gave him the charge, had some correspondence to his three denials; but still, I say, there was nothing in the circumstances of his denial to bring out this. And, therefore, it seems, as the other passage about the Apostles generally, to be a substantive act of our Lord; a new gift—something arising out of the future—and not some restoration merely. That seems to be so.

And then I say that it is remarkable that this high gift should be given in the Old Testament. We know it was given to certain favourite and elect servants of God, as David, and David became the vicegerent, or the representative of Almighty God as a shepherd. It seems to me that this passage—the twenty-first chapter of S. John—does a parallel act, as regards S. Peter; and much higher, of course, inasmuch as our

Lord, as the Incarnate Saviour is, in His office, and in His promise to His people, a greater depth of blessing than was accorded in the Old Testament. We know our Lord had, as it is often said, a triple office,—He was a king, He was a prophet, and He was a priest. Now, in His case, the word "shepherd" combines all three. It is plain from that Psalm which I read; it is the office of ruling, it is the office of teaching, because that is represented by the word "feed;" a shepherd feeds his sheep. And thirdly, in those countries we know that the shepherd's office is one of great danger. He has to defend, as we find in the case of David, his sheep from the wild beasts; he has to take care that there is no great suffering, that they have pasture, that they are kept from inclement weather, and the like. We hear of that great struggle they had, in the case of Jacob too, when he served under Laban, as well as in David. Therefore, a great deal is contained—distinct—in the office of shepherd. The representative of our Lord would rule if he is a shepherd, and he would teach if he is a shepherd, and he would at least be ready to go through all suffering for his flock. That great office seems to be given through S. Peter, and it is something, it seems to me, distinct from any other office which is given to any one else under the new covenant.

My dear brethren, we are all Catholics, we all believe this, and there is no need to say it in order to strengthen our faith; but it is, of course, pleasant, and a cause of thanksgiving, that when we come to contemplate and consider that which is a matter of faith with us, we find so much in it which is co-

incident, concordant with the facts that come before us here in Scripture or otherwise; and that is the first remark which I should make upon our Lord calling Himself in S. John's Gospel, the tenth chapter, the Good Shepherd; and in the twenty-first, after the resurrection, and when He was going, as it were, to delegate, to transfer His sheep to S. Peter, He says, "My sheep:" I would not rely too much upon the word "My;" still, there is a force in it taken in connection with that which the passage also contains.

The next thought which comes to me on this passage is, that it was impossible that the promises and commands of our Lord during the forty days should come into execution all at once. It is commonly said, and truly,—indeed, S. Luke says it,—that during the forty days He taught them about the kingdom of God, that is, about His Church, His elect body; He gave them rules and directions, and it was impossible that they could come into exercise, that they could be carried out all at once. They could not be carried out in the lifetime of the Apostles. They had to bring,—the first thing was to bring souls into the Church. It was not a question at first of the structure of the Church, but of the existence of it. We find S. Peter, on various occasions, shewing himself at the head of the Apostles—on the day of Pentecost, when we find he spoke for the eleven. So there are various little indications both before our Lord's Passion and Resurrection, and after. But still it was impossible, I say, to guide a flock of sheep till that flock ex-

isted; and that was continued some time, of course a considerable time.

Then there is another thought that comes upon that. We recollect that Judah, the fourth son of Jacob, was the predestined royal tribe of which David was; yet the tribe of Judah till David's time, which was many centuries, did not shew that those promises belonged to it. There is hardly anything, very little said of Judah, certainly no appearance of pre-eminence, I say, for many centuries. And therefore it does not seem to be any reason that S. Peter did not take that office which He seems to have given him in the twenty-first chapter of S. John, because his successors did not shew it. And that makes me say this, too, that it is clear that that succession was intended, because the rules could not exist in the lifetime of the Apostles. He says, "I will be with you all days;" but they were not to live on earth for ever. They were to die, they were to be cut off; and thus the divine system drawn out in forty days would never be brought into reality, into existence. Therefore, there must be, from the nature of the case, a succession. And then I want to know, if bishops are to succeed, why is not the Chief Pastor, the Prince of Pastors, his representative, why is he not to have a succession too? Somewhere we must look for that succession; that again seems plain.

And again, if we take the case of the Episcopacy, of the bishops, why, it is acknowledged that they did not—though they existed at a certain date—exist quite from the beginning. It was a kind of pro-

visional system, till there was scope, and room, and opportunity to bring in the divine system. It is not wonderful that a longer time was necessary to bring in that which occupied a far larger space, which was to extend over the whole world; and therefore it does not seem to be anything strange that the words of our Lord in S. John, in committing His sheep on His departure to S. Peter, that those words should be a considerable time before they had a fulfilment. I am supposing it was a considerable time, and of course it must have been some time, for the reason I have mentioned. In a time of formation, of inchoation, in a time of great trouble, great disorder, great persecution, it was, humanly speaking, impossible that the divine system could come into shape. Therefore it seems that everything has happened in that way which is natural; and as Judah, on account of the great troubles of Israel having to get into the land, and then the troubles of the Judges, which were such as almost to destroy the faith of the Mosaic Covenant and the authority of the Mosaic polity, — if that was the case there, it is not wonderful that a time, a considerable time, supposing it to be, passed before the Christian dispensation was brought into its perfect shape.

There is only one other thought which occurs to me, and which I will mention, and that is, that it seems antecedently — of course one cannot decide things by antecedent, *à priori* order and rule; — but still, when one has reason to believe a thing, it is a great confirmation to find that, from the nature of the case, the thing must be, according to our

apprehension; and it must be considered that no large body, humanly speaking, can exist without a head. You have in the old times, you have in the Middle Ages, small republics; but whenever a small body, a small polity, becomes large, the tendency is, from the necessity of the case, to have a head. We know how the great Roman empire began as a Republic; but still, when it had conquered the whole world, the whole known world, or nearly such, it naturally tended, it could not get on, if I may say so, without having a head. There must be a concentration of power. So, again, if we look at the great Republic on the other side of the world, which has been set up within the last hundred years, they cannot get on without a head. They may have very different rules, but still it is necessary; and, humanly speaking, unless Almighty God was to rule by miracles, I do not see how a large body, a large Catholic, ecumenical body, which was to cover the whole earth, could possibly get on without a centre.

Therefore it seems, on the whole, from the words of our Lord, from the analogy of the Old Testament, and from the nature of the case, it seems to be as clear as possible, even in the eye of reason, that that state of things which we acknowledge, and which we have faith in, and which we obey, is the divine one, is the true one.

I have said, my dear brethren, that I had no need to say this to well-instructed Catholics such as you; but of course we all have to live in the world, and we all have various necessities of, I was going to say, controversy; but we all may be asked questions, and S. Peter tells us we should have an answer to ques-

tions. We all have to do good if we can, and we cannot do greater good than by bringing souls into the ark of salvation. If we have, as (thank God) we have, clear views on the subject, we know the extreme benefit, the extreme blessing, the blessedness beyond measure, of being members of the Church. We know what great privileges we have from that union; we know what grace is given us; we know the security, what peace, what quiet, how we feel that there is a strong foundation under our feet, how we feel that we are not walking on the water and sinking, but that we can rejoice and be happy, and go about our work without a perplexing thought. We know how dreadful it is to many people, to all serious people, to doubt. We know how many there are who pray, and I believe with a true spirit; who pray to have the light shewn them, and the light does not come, for some good reason in God's dispensation, either to make them cry more earnestly, or for some reason or other. It is very dark, and we have need of faith amid such facts—as much as in anything, that Almighty God sometimes does not seem to hear prayer—but of course we have a temptation. Still, that being the case, and when we know how many good souls —to speak according to the standard of goodness which comes before us—how many good souls would gladly be Catholics if they could, I say, if we can, if we are able to put before them one sugge[illegible] or another which may not at the moment con[illegible] them, which they may think weak even, but which in God's mercy may be blest to do them good,— if we do that, we really do a good work. And

therefore I do not think I am wrong in putting this before you, with full confidence and knowledge that your faith does not depend upon reason, but upon the Word of God. And may God bless you, if there is anything in what I have said,—to profit by it.